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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2124
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4247
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHSA](#) [EWWT](#) [SN](#) [ID](#) [MY](#)
SUBJECT: DUTCH TO JOIN RECAAP; SINGAPORE STILL PREFERS SLOW
TRACK FOR OUTSIDE COUNTRIES

Classified By: DCM DANIEL SHIELDS FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)(D)

¶1. (SBU) The Netherlands will soon join the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), Yoshiaki Ito, ReCAAP Information Centre Executive Director told Poloffs during an early November visit to the Centre. The Netherlands request had been approved by all RECAAP members, and it would now be the first non-Asian country to join ReCAAP, Ito noted. Clearly happy about the expansion of RECAAP, Ito said Dutch participation will bring RECAAP membership to fifteen countries.

¶2. (SBU) Ito told us RECAAP was beginning to become more firmly established after a shaky start resulting from Malaysia and Indonesia's unhappiness over its being located in Singapore. Malaysia and Indonesia have still given no indication of when they might join RECAAP, but Ito said the two countries seem to be more comfortable with the organization, sharing piracy information and participating in some RECAAP activities. He thought that eventually both would join. Ito did not address the question of eventual U.S. membership, but did express interest in inviting U.S. experts to participate in a ReCAAP capacity building workshop sometime in 2009.

¶3. (SBU) In response to a question about how regional states handle captured pirates, Ito noted that ReCAAP is in consultations with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on that very question. Each of the three littoral states (Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore) would prosecute pirates according to their own laws, Ito said. The non-littoral states have not captured pirates in the Straits to date, Ito said. Additionally, pirates are almost exclusively captured in one of the three states' territorial waters, so that regional states' experience with captured pirates in the Straits of Malacca could not likely be applied to the Gulf of Aden, where the pirates are often captured in either international waters or in the territorial waters of a failed state (Somalia).

SINGAPORE STILL UNEASY ON OUTSIDE (USG) MEMBERSHIP

¶4. (C) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Special Projects Assistant Director Iris Chen told Poloff November 12 that the Singapore government is continuing to discuss internally the potential for other non-regional/non-Asian countries to join ReCAAP,. With the Netherlands already set to join, the natural next step would be to invite other non-regional countries to join the agreement, Chen said. However, she indicated that the GOS is still uncomfortable with the idea of either the United

States or Australia joining before Indonesia and Malaysia have done so, fearing it would discourage the latter two countries from joining.

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